

Message Text

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E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CH, US

SUBJECT: THAT SONG AGAIN AND CHIANG CHING IN THE SPOTLIGHT

1. SUMMARY: CHIANG CHING LED THE STAND-UP APPLAUSE FOR THE SONG, "PEOPLE OF TAIWAN, OUR OWN BROTHERS" AND IN GENERAL WAS THE REAL CHINESE STAR AT THE FEBRUARY 23 CULTURAL EVENT STAGED IN THE AUDITORIUM OF THE GREAT HALL FOR FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON. THE POSSIBILITY OF A MORE RELAXED PRC ATTITUDE TOWARD CHINESE TRADITIONAL MUSIC IS SUGGESTED BY THE HIGH PROPORTION OF SUCH MUSIC IN THE PROGRAM. END SUMMARY

2. THE FIRST VIP ROW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT SEATED VICE FOREIGN MINISTER WANG HAI-JUNG, FOREIGN MINISTER CHIAO KUAN-HUA, CULTURAL MINISTER YU HUI-YUNG, MME. CHIANG, MR. NIXON MRS. NIXON, ACTING PREMIER HUA KUO-FENG, VICE CHAIRMAN ZLD ZIEN-WEI OF THE NPC STANDING COMMITTEE, AND PRCLO CHIEF HUANG CHEN. (USLO ACTING CHIEF AND ECON COUNSELOR WERE IN SECOND OF TWO VIP ROWS.) HUA SAT STOLIDLY THROUGH THE THREE HOURS, SMOKING, LIGHTING NEIGHBOR YAO'S CIGARETTES, BUT EXCHANGING FEW WORDS WITH MRS. NIXON THROUGH INTERPRETER SHIH YEN-HUA SEATED BEHIND THEM. IN CONTRAST, MME. CHIANG, WEARING A FAIRLY JAZZY PANTSUIT (BROWN WITH A TRACE OF BURGUNDY) AND NEAR MATCHING HORNED-
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RIMMED GLASSES, SEEMED CONSTANTLY ANIMATED. THROUGH INTER-
PRETER CHANG HAN-CHIH SHE EXPLAINED TO MR. NIXON VARIOUS ASPECTS

OF THE PERFORMANCES. SHE CHATTED WITH CHANG HERSELF; OFTEN TURNED TO MAKE BRIEF REMARKS TO CULTURAL MINISTER YU, WHOSE ATTENTION SHE OBTAINED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS BY REACHING ACROSS TO TOUCH HIS ARM WITH A SOMEWHAT MOTHERLY GESTURE. ON ANOTHER OCCASION SHE REACHED ACROSS YU TO TAP THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON THE SHOULDER, CALLING UPON HIM TO GIVE AN ENGLISH EQUIVALENT WHICH HIS WIFE, INTERPRETER CHANG, HAD BEEN UNABLE TO SUPPLY. CHIAO CASUALLY LEANED BEHIND THE CHAIR TO CALL THE ENGLISH WORD TO CHANG. WANG HAI-JUNG, TOROUGH ALL THIS ACTION, SAT SILENTLY WATCHING THE PERFORMANCE AND SAYING ALMOST NOTHING, EVEN TO HER NEIGHBOR CHIAO.

3. AS IF THOSE ACTIONS MIGHT BE INSUFFICIENT TO ENSURE NOTICE, CHIANG MANAGED TO ATTRACT EVEN GREATER ATTENTION TO HERSELF BY FREQUENTLY INTERJECTING APPLAUSE BEFORE PERFORMERS HAD FINISHED, FOR RENDERING OF CERTAIN MUSICAL PASSAGES.

4. THIS RELENTLESS ATTENTION-GETTING WAS CLIMAXED AS THE TENOR SOLOIST FINISHED HIS RENDITION OF "PEOPLE OF TAIWAN, OUR OWN BROTHERS." HAVING APPLAUDED OCCASIONALLY IN THE COURSE OF THAT RENDITION, ON ITS FINISH CHIANG SPRANG TO HER FEET WHILE SHARPLY CLAPPING HANDS. OTHER CHINESE, JOINED BY MRS. NIXON, ALSO ROSE WHILE MR. NIXON REMAINED IN HIS CHAIR, SEEMING TO BARELY PRESS HIS HANDS TOGETHER IN POLITENESS. USLO PERSONNEL ALSO REMAINED SEATED. AT THE LAST MOMENT, MR. NIXON SEEMED TO BE ABOUT TO MOVE OUT OF HIS CHAIR BUT THEN SETTLED BACK INTO IT. THE AUDITORIUM AND MME. CHAING SETTLED DOWN FOR THE NEXT, LESS-LOADED SOLO, "DON'T FORGET TO STORE GRAIN AFTER A GOOD HARVEST."

5. MME. CHIANG MANAGED TO RETAIN THE SPOTLIGHT EVEN AFTER THE END OF THE PERFORMANCE WHEN ALL THOSE ON THE FIRST ROW MOVED TO THE STAGE TO SHAKE HANDS WITH THE PERFORMERS AND HAVE THEIR PORTRAIT TAKEN. ACTING PREMIER HUA, FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY MRS. NIXON, QUICKLY WENT THROUGH THE HANDSHAKING ROUTINE; MR. NIXON, ON THE OTHER HAND, SPOKE WARMLY AND AT LENGTH TO VIRTUALLY EACH OF THE TWO-SCORE PERFORMERS. MME. CHIANG IMMEDIATELY BEHIND HIM MANAGED AS SHE SHOOK HANDS TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF THROUGH FAMILIARITY WITH EACH OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHOSE PER-
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FORMANCE SHE WAS CONGRATULATING.

6. PEKING TELEVISION'S FEBRUARY 24TH COVERAGE OF THE PREVIOUS EVENING'S

CULTURAL EVENT CONCENTRATED ON THE PERFORMING OF THE TAIWAN SONG AND HOME ON THE RANGE(FULL FOOTAGE OF BOTH) PLUS THE VIP ACTIVITIES ON STAGE AFTER THE SHOW.

7. NCNA'S REPORT ON THE CONTENTS OF THE PROGRAM FEATURED THE TAIWAN SONG, A DANCE NUMBER "MILITIAWOMEN ON THE GRASSLAND,"

THE TWO AMERICAN SONGS AND A CLASSICAL SONG, "MY THOUGHTS, TO THE TUNE OF MAN CHIANG HUNG." THIS LAST, THE NOTE IN THE PROGRAM HANDED OUT AT THE CONCERT EXPLAINED, DESCRIBES THE SUNG DYNASTY GENERAL YUEH FEI'S "PATRIOT RESOLVE TO FIGHT AND DEFEAT THE ENEMY."

THE "MAN CHIANG HUNG" RHYME SCHEME IS, OF COURSE, ALSO THE ONE USED BY MAO IN HIS JANUARY 1963 POEM TO KUO MO-JO. THE THEN PRESIDENT QUOTED FROM THIS POEM IN A TOAST DURING HIS FEBRUARY 1972 VISIT.

THERE WAS A SURPRISINGLY LARGE REPRESENTATION OF CLASSICAL MUSIC INCLUDING TWO SELECTIONS LABELED AS FROM TRADITIONAL PEKING OPERA, COMPARED TO ONLY ONE FROM MODERN REVOLUTIONARY PEKING OPERA. MANY OF THE CHINESE IN THE AUDIENCE DID NOT HAVE PROGRAMS, AND AMONG THEM THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF OLD TUNES CAUSED A BUZZ OF INTEREST AND APPARENT PLEASURE, CHIANG CHING--THE PATRONESS OF MODERN REVOLUTIONARY PEKING OPERA--APPEARED TO ENJOY ALL THE PIECES, TRADITIONAL AND MODERN, ABOUT EQUALLY. THUS ANOTHER USE OF THE EVENING MAY HAVE BEEN TO SIGNAL A MORE RELAXED PRC STANCE TOWARD TRADITIONAL MUSIC--OR AT LEAST THOSE PIECES THAT, LIKE MOST OF THE ONES IN THE PROGRAM, HAVE A PATRIOTIC OR SUPPOSED CLASS STRUGGLE CONTENT. (WE ARE SENDING COPIES OF THE PROGRAM TO HONG KONG AND THE DEPARTMENT.) IF THIS PROVES TO BE THE CASE, SUCH A POLICY, ASSOCIATED WITH CHIANG CHING, WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY ENHANCE HER IMAGE WITH THE GENERAL POPULACE. THAYER

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